A Review of the Week.

By Edgar Saltus.

Concerning:
The War in Africa.
The Vanderbilts.
Society.
Our Sultan.

NEWS from the Cape has been exciting, but less so than it will be. Ladysmith may be gloomy, but the fate of the Dark Continent is clear. It wont be this, that and the other in spots—it will be British all over. Prophecy is not in our line unless we know how matters are going. In this case we have a pretext for airing a little information, and, what is more satisfactory, we have a text.

Eighty-five years ago by the clock Napoleon announced that Prussia would develop into a Germany reconstituted, that Italy would become united, that Spain would lose her colonies and France subside. The Oracle of Delphi never did better, and we suspect that it never did as well. But here is some more. Napoleon wound up with the prediction that supremacy would be divided between Russia preponderant in the Orient and England mistress of Africa.

Napoleon was always right when he did not happen to be wrong, in which respect he was just like the rest of us. Russia is not preponderant in the Orient yet. She will get there, however. In forty years she has crawled from the Urals to the Pacific. The flag of Britain does not yet flaunt from Somali to Senegambia or from Cape to Cairo, either. But it will. A recent historian has stated that it was in a fit of absent-mindedness that England carved out of Africa slice after slice. Absent-mindedness is a good word, but it strikes us that abstraction would be preciser. In any event, the process will soon be in operation, and we propose to sit tight and watch it at work. Meanwhile the suggestion of unselfish Europe that Mr. McKinley should step in and interfere has contributed considerably to our amusement, as doubtless it has contributed to his. Nationally we have the reputation of being great at entertaining, but there are limits to entertainment, and we can't entertain that.

Here is another kettle of fish. Last week and several days previous there figured locally, pictorially and typographically a young New York gentlewoman—if so many descriptions may be permitted where so little space is allowed—who may confidently be regarded as the most expensive lady out. In saying that we are not unmindful of the Helen for whom the war of the world was fought, nor yet of Cleopatra, for whom an empire was forsook—or, if it be preferred, forsaken—nor even of other heroines of history whom we wont cite, in order that we may not seem to know more than we do. But these princesses lived a long time ago. It may be that some of them did not live at all, and it is just possible that the stories about the others aren't true. The point is that the chronicles of society as well as the records of romance hold no counterpart of the lady on whom was placed the fifty-million-dollar tax.

There is an awkward amount to have about the house, yet tidy to have in trust. Particularly at 6 per cent. At that rate, in round figures, income approximates 75 cents a minute. We have heard a rumor, which is presumably false, and therefore all the more interesting, that in Upper Fifth avenue a penny less and you are pinched. But journalists should not believe everything they write. Personally we give no credence to such gossip, and, anyway, the point is elsewhere, or, rather, it is right here. If this lady and her husband hit it off well together, and we have not a reason in the world wherewith to assume that they don't, the loss of a possible fifty million or even of an impossible hundred billion is a bagatelle.

In some paper recently we saw it stated that money was tight—a very vulgar condition for it to be in, by the way—but even had we learned that it was loose, the fact would not have kept us awake. Wealth never has and never will consist in money, whether tight or loose, and however multiplied. The poverty of plutocrats is pitiable. Croesus is no longer a synonyme for splendor. The late Mr. Mill catalogued wealth as the possession of a large number of useful things. Care may be similarly defined. Wealth lolls in the lap of the contented. The richest people are those who each morning are able to say, "The day is mine." Where is the Midas that can? The Cornelius Vanderbilts possess that ability. In view of which we take it that to them not condolences, but congratulations, are in order. At the same time it is only righteous to praise the bountiful Providence which enables us to despise what we have not got.

Apropos to which, or rather to matters mundane, we have read somewhere that, socially speaking, the coming season will be dull. We read the prognostic last year. We read it the year before. What is true about it is not new, and what is new is not true. The world over, society is the same. The best is usually the worst. Witness Mayfair. Witness Whitehall. The one is as bad as the other, with the difference that, while in the latter there was brilliance, the former is lack lustre. In the days of Charles the Second society sinned and sparkled. To-day it sins and yawns. There is modern progress. There, too, is the cause of the dulness prognosticated by the press. Dances, dinners and divorces don't constitute diversion. Fine feathers are not witty. The embellishing of the ballroom does not predicate brains. To provide gayety society should get to work and produce embellished minds. Yes, indeed. And when it does the millennium will be in sight.

Talking of high life, the Sultan of Sulu, whose treaty has caused much pleasant comment, put up not long ago at a Singapore house of entertainment, where he was robbed of his crown. What of it? But at least we may be sorry. Besides, when the Philippine archipelago is twisted into a territory, there and then His Highness becomes a prospective citizen of the United States. Actually lord of all he surveys, anteriorly, by virtue of another treaty, he received from Spain, in recognition of her sovereignty, the title of lieutenant-general, which he never used, and a pension of 10,000 pesetas, which was never paid.

In the present treaty he stipulates, among other things, for a superintendent of the seraglio. And naturally. If he can't keep an eye on his crown, a caretaker for his concubines is in order. He further stipulates that the salary of the individual shall be paid by this country. Such payment would hardly be in accordance with Jeffersonian traditions, would it? But no matter. We wont bother over that now.

The seraglio, which is situated at Maybun, consists in a big bungalow of bamboo. The interior is fitted with flowers and sultanas. The flowers are recognizably of the sub-tropical variety, and we have been given to understand that so are the sultanas also. The apparel of these ladies is a commingling of the fashions of the Occident and the Orient—shirt waists and trousers. The costume of the Sultan is less exotically composed of silk breeches, a canary sash, a jacket of apple green, and a crown. It is of the latter he was robbed. In view of presumable developments the circumstance is instructive. Coming events cast their shadows before.

EDGAR SALTUS.

How I Became an Orator.

By U. S. Senator Mark Hanna.

"Almost everywhere I have spoken I have been personally requested to speak on the trust question."

IT was in the famous campaign of 1896 that I made the first speech of my life. It was almost on the twentieth anniversary of my debut in politics. It was during the last week of that very hot campaign.

All of us were tired out. Most of the speakers of national importance had gone home or were en route. The few remaining speakers had assignments that could not be interfered with. The Polish vote of Chicago is a big factor in the politics of that city. Many a candidate has learned this to his sorrow. We had been apprised of the necessity of getting this vote. Through hard work on our part we succeeded in organizing a large Polish Republican club. We were resting content with the thought that we had the ward in question carried when the Democrats awoke to the situation. They arranged two meetings. One was held in the afternoon and one in the evening. Bryan and Altgeld spoke at both. They succeeded in undoing in about four hours what it had taken weeks of hard work to accomplish.

One of the Polish leaders appealed to the National Committee for assistance. He said that unless a rousing Republican meeting were held immediately all our work would go for naught. I told him that all the speakers had gone home; that we had no one on whom we could depend.

"Suit yourself," he replied, "but if no meeting is held, I wont answer for the consequences."

I was pretty well alarmed. We needed that ward. We could not afford to lose it.

The situation was discussed by some of the committeemen.

"Let Hanna go," some one suggested. The idea was taken up. I protested, but with no avail. For twenty-four hours, our time limit, the ward was canvassed and the meeting advertised as few meetings have been advertised since. The opposition papers took it up, and on the morning after the advertisements appeared assured me that I would get a warm reception that evening.

The detective department of the police force sent men to me warning me against all sorts of plots that had been laid to break up the meeting. The Democrats seemed determined to prevent, if possible, my speaking.

I was also informed that I might have to pass through dense crowds in reaching the meeting place, so I started early. It was a good thing I did. I was very dubious as to the outcome of what to me was a rather hazardous adventure. The meeting place was about three squares from Republican headquarters. It required just five minutes less than one hour for the carriage to make the trip. The ride along the first square was without event. Toward its end, however, I could not help but notice that an unusually large number of people were on the streets, and by the time I had traversed half of the second block I concluded that it would be a good thing to have the driver stop and give the horses a rest.

Whatever conclusion I did reach, it is an absolute fact that the street was impassable, so crowded was it. Loafers, whose breaths indicated available Democratic whiskey, poked their heads into the carriage, leered at me and addressed me in the foulest language that I had ever heard. They advised me to go home. They told me that if I wanted a whole skin I had better clear out. It must be confessed that I did feel rather shaky.

The mob that had prepared this reception for me, however, overdid it. The horses were finally able to proceed, thanks to the efficient work of the police, and I was congratulating myself on having passed through the worst of the trouble, when a lightning-like flash of light struck me squarely in the eyes. It was from a calcium light that had been placed for my benefit on the building adjoining the one in which I was to speak. For about twenty minutes I was tortured by the pranks played by this glaring, blinding light.

I became boiling mad. I believe I could have licked the operator of that light with ease. In this frame of mind I entered the hall. There was a large crowd.

Before I had fully relieved myself of the angry utterances I made the men who had crowded into the hall had become attentive. I talked at them. I used no flourishes. I had no funny stories to tell. I talked at them.

We carried the ward.

When it was announced that I was to take the stump for Judge Nash, many Republicans were considerably perturbed over the outlook, knowing as they did my attitude toward these business combinations, more commonly called trusts. To tell the truth I hardly knew how my utterances on this question would be taken. When I finally opened up, these same Republicans were actually alarmed. I was pretty certain, however, that common sense would triumph with voters over mere sentiment, and now I have the satisfaction of knowing that almost everywhere I have spoken I have been personally requested to speak on the trust question.

There is only one thing I dislike about public speaking. It makes me pose in the light of a public orator. This is something I never will be. I have no eloquence in me. I am too plain and blunt in my statements. I simply talk to the people as I would to you or anybody else in conversation. I never wrote a speech in my life. Never had one written for me, and probably never will. If I speak well it is because I am sincere in my utterances and tell the people just what I think.

On Officers Taking Cover in Battle.

By Ambrose Bierce.

"The gallantry that manifests itself under fire by standing lone and conspicuous, unconcernedly rolling cigarettes, is distinctively patrician."

ACCOMPANYING the first reports of the British-Boer engagement at Elandslaagte were some interesting figures regarding the losses of men and officers on the British side. It seems that in proportion to their numbers five times as many officers as enlisted men were killed and three times as many wounded. In all battles between civilized forces there is a disproportionate mortality among officers, but these figures are uncommon. They are explained in the dispatches by "the traditions of the British army," which deny a commanding officer the advantage of "taking cover;" when the men are ordered to lie down the officer remains on his feet, a conspicuous, isolated target for the enemy's rifles. In the action at Elandslaagte (I wish I could feel sure that that is anything like the real name of the place) the British tactics, as determined by those of the enemy and by the nature of the ground, were peculiarly unfavorable to longevity among officers. The fighting lasted all day, the attack on the Boer position consuming several hours, during which the British lines advanced foot by foot across open ground, frequently aligning and lying down to rest or deliver volleys. Exposure of officers in these circumstances was constant and hazardous. The wonder is that any of those in the charging line came out of the affair with whole skins.

I do not know with what degree of authority the "traditions" forbid British officers to lie down or take cover. If it is really an inviolable law among them they pay pretty dearly for their rank and dignity. But I fancy the matter is very much as it is in our own regular army—that the "tradition" exists not as a hard and fast law, but as an historical suggestion, a good deal of latitude being allowed in its observance. Perhaps it has something of the same limitations of meaning that abstention from profanity had to a certain gentleman whose besetting sin it had been, but who, snatched as a brand from the burning, had "joined the church." One day a deacon of his congregation overheard him uttering in anger an interminable sequence of the most awful oaths conceivable. "What!" exclaimed the shocked hierarch, interrupting, "do you not propose to observe the third commandment?"

"Yes, I do," answered the culprit, exhausted by his own volubility, "but not so rigidly that I'll be tempted to break it."

In the fighting about Santiago de Cuba the mortality among officers of the regular army was very great. The volunteer officers, I think, suffered less severely. In the volunteers there are no traditions of any kind to be observed, and in the regulars fewer and less exacting ones than in the historic regiments of the British. Some of these organizations are centuries old, with "records" in scores of wars—records as dear to officers and men as if they had themselves personally participated in all the campaigns and engagements of the organizations to which they belong. The regiments have, moreover, historic names, not merely meaningless numbers, as in our own army. As a nucleus for honors and glorious memories an arithmetical designation hardly serves. The hope of associating things of that kind with a set of figures is as futile as an attempt to bestow the Victoria Cross upon a moonbeam. A further reason why such heroic nonsense as refusal under all circumstances to take cover from the enemy's fire may prevail in the British more than in the American service is found in the higher social rank of the average British officer. The officers of our regular army are mostly gentlemen, but a majority of them began to be gentlemen pretty late in life—most of them when they entered the Military Academy; whereas the English officer, as a rule, is a gentleman nascitur non fit. It makes a difference, not perhaps in courage, but in that punctilious observance of the "proprieties" of which the custom under consideration is merely an example. Plebeian gallantry is disposed to be practical and logical. When needful it rages lionwise in the forefront of battle; during seasons of inactivity it is not unmindful of the value to his country of an officer's life, nor insensible to the advantages of social obscurity at home. The gallantry that manifests itself under fire by standing lone and conspicuous, unconcernedly rolling cigarettes, is distinctively patrician.

As to the military value of that sort of thing—I mean its direct and immediate effectiveness in contributing to victory—much depends upon circumstances. That an officer's coolness and apparent unconcern do much to tranquillize the men if they are excited and hearten them if demoralized goes without saying; and men do get terribly excited in battle and terribly demoralized when it is going against them. Whether in any particular engagement this tranquillizing effect is worth the lives lost in securing it—that is a matter for omniscience, wherewith military writers are not abundantly equipped. Among the less obvious advantages of the "traditions" that it is an officer's duty to encourage his men by getting himself killed is that of promoting promotion.

Sometimes the tactical advantage of personal exposure to peril is undeniable; for whether it is real or imaginary no one with a decent weakness for the heroic will deny it. Such an instance was that of Hancock on the third day at Gettysburg. For an unconscionable time Lee had been preparing the way for Pickett's memorable charge by the concentrated fire of one hundred and fifty guns against the Federal centre. So searching was this awful fire that those who had not the good luck to be killed by it flattened themselves like soles and actually bored into the earth to escape it. Horses, guns, caissons, ammunition wagons—everything movable except the men—were rushed over the crest of the ridge for such protection as was possible where half the torment came from above. It seemed as if not even a blade of grass could lift its head and not be shorn from its root. At that intolerable time General Hancock mounted his horse, and at the head of a cavalcade of reluctant staff officers and orderlies (poor fellows) rode slowly along the ridge distinctly visible to every Confederate gunner. He gave no commands; none were necessary and none could have been heard; but the icy effrontery of the performance put new hearts into those flattened men, and Pickett was beaten before he charged. But if all the officers on that ridge had had the presumption to be heroic the Confederate historian might have recorded the outcome with a more jubilant pen.

I know not how it was in the war with Spain, nor how it is in the war with Aguinaldo; but among the volunteers of the war of the first rebellion there was no law, written or unwritten, forbidding officers to take cover. Most of them habitually did so when their men did, and so far as I could observe without loss of prestige or respect. Always there were visible in action a few who, as a rule, did not, excepting, of course, in the defence of fortified lines. These non-conformists were subject to frequent rebuke by superior authority, the command "Lie down, sir!" or "Take cover, sir!" having sometimes an added austerity from the circumstance of its delivery from the back of a horse. Commonly, however, when a collision in the offing was visibly imminent, the horses of field officers were sent to the rear, more, I think, to preserve them than their riders. So far as my memory serves, general officers during field fighting usually remained in the saddle when near the front. At the battle of Stone River General Rosecrans sought to hearten up his hard-pressed army by riding with his staff along the front, immediately in rear of the "firing line." Unfortunately he deprived the performance of its expected effect by riding at a wild gallop, which, however, did not prevent his chief of staff from losing his head by a cannon shot. It was not the only head of that group which was lost that day, but it was the best one.

At Shiloh, during a pause in the fight of Hazen's brigade, the enemy's fire hot, sharp and incessant, a young lieutenant, as witty and as brave a man as the brigade contained, was standing behind a tree. A fat and fussy field officer passing by roared out:

"Lieutenant, what are you doing behind that tree? Behind that tree, sir."

The offender left his cover, walked coolly up to his irascible superior, and, respectfully saluting, replied:

"Sir, I have the honor to report that I was engaged in wishing that it grew in my father's pasture."

Mr. Dooley on War and War Makers.

By F. P. Dunne.

"TELL ye, Hinnissy," said Mr. Dooley, "ye can't do th' English speakin' people. Oursilves an' th' hands acrost th' sea ar-re rapidly teachin' th' benighted Lutheryan an' other haythin that as a race we're onvincible an' oncatchable. Th' Anglo-Saxon race meetin's now goin' on in th' Philippeens an' South Africa ought to convince annywan that give us a fair start an' we can bate th' wurruld to a tillygraft office.

"Th' war our cousins by Sir Thomas Lipton is prosecutin', as Hogan says, again' th' foul but accrate Boers is doin' more than that. It's givin' us a common war lithrachoor. I wudden't believe at first whin I r-read th' dispatches in th' pa-apers that me frind Gin'ral Otis wasn't in South Africa. It was on'y whin I see another chapter in his justly cillybrated seeryal story, intitled 'Th' Capture iv Porac,' that I knew he had an imitator in th' mother country. An' be hivins, I like th' English la-ad's style almost as well as our own gr-reat artist's. Mebbe 'tis, as the pa-apers say, that Otis has writ himsilf out. Annyhow, th' las' chapter isn't thrillin'. He says: 'To-day th' ar-rmy undher my command fell upon th' inimy with gr-reat slaughters an' seized th' important town of Porac, which I have mintioned befure, but,' he says, 'we ar-re fortunately now safe in Manila.' Ye see, he doesn't keep up th' intherest to th' end. Th' English pote does betther.

"'Las' night at eight o'clock,' he says, 'we found our slendher but inthrepid ar-rmy surrounded by wan hundhred thousan' Boers,' he says. 'We attackted thim with gr-reat fury,' he says, 'pursuin' thim up th' almost inaccessible mountain side an' capturin' eight guns which we didn't want, so we give thim back to thim with siveral iv our own,' he says. 'Th' Irish rig'mints,' he says, 'th' Kerry Rifles, th' Land Leaguers' Own an' th' Dublin Pots, commanded be th' pop'lar Irish sojer Gin'ral Sir Ponsonby Tompkins, wint into battle singin' their well-known naytional anthem, "Mrs. Innery 'Awkins Is a Pust-Class Name." Th' Boers retreated,' he says, 'pursued be th' Davitt Terrors, who cut their way through th' fugitives with awful slaughter,' he says. 'They have now,' he says, 'pinethrated as far as Pretoria,' he says, 'th' officers arrivin' in first-class carridges an' th' men in thrucks,' he says, 'an ar-re camped in th' bettin' shed, where they ar-re afforded ivry attintion be th' vanquished inimy,' he says. 'As f'r us,' he says, 'we decided afther th' victhry to light out f'r Ladysmith,' he says. 'Th' inimy had similar htintions,' he says, 'but their skill has been vastly overrated,' he says. 'We bate thim,' he says, 'we bate thim be thirty miles,' he says.

"That's where we're sthrong, Hinnissy. We may get licked on th' battle field, we may be climbin' threes n th' Philippeens with arrows stickin' in us like quills, as Hogan says, into th' freful porcupine, or we may be doin' a mile in five minyits flat down th' pike that leads to Cape Town, pursued be th' less fleet but more ignorant Boers, peltin' us with guns full iv goold an' Bibles, but in th' pages iv histhry that our childhren read we niver turned back on e'er an inimy. We make our own gloryous pages on th' battle field, in th' camp an' in th' Cab'net meetin'."

"Well, 'tis all r-right f'r ye to be jokin'," said Mr. Hennessy, "but there's manny a brave fellow down there that it's no joke to."

"If Chamberlain likes war so much, 'tis him that ought to be down here in South Africa, peltin' over th' road, with ol' Kruger chasin' him with a hoe."

"Thrue f'r ye," said Mr. Dooley, "an' that's why I wisht it cud be fixed up so's th' men that starts th' wars could do th' fightin'. Th' trouble is that all th' preliminaries is arranged be matchmakers, an' all they'se left f'r fighters is to do th' murdhrin'. A man's got a good job at home an' he wants to make it stronger. How can he do it? By throwin' out some one that's got an akelly good job down th' street. Now, he don't go over, as I wud, an' say, 'Here, Schwartzmeister (or Kruger, as th' case may be), I don't like ye'er appearance, ye made a monkey iv me in argymint befure th' neighborhood, an' if ye continyue in business ye'll hurt me trade, so here goes to move ye into th' sthreet.' Not that la-ad. He gets a crowd around him, an' says he:

"'Kruger (or Schwartzmeister, as th' case may be) is no good. To begin with, he's a Dutchman. If that ain't enough, he's a cantin', hymn singin', murdhrous wretch that wudden't lave wan iv our counthrymen ate a square meal if he had his way. I'll give ye all two dollars a week if ye'll go over an' desthroy him.' An' th' other la-ad, what does he do? He calls in th' neighbors an' says he: 'Dooley is sindin' down a gang iv savages to murdher me. Do ye lave your wurruk an' your families an' rally ar-round me, an' where ye see me plug hat wave do ye go in th' other direction,' he says, 'an' slay th' brutal inimy,' he says. An' off goes th' sojers an' they meet a lot iv la-ads that looks like thimsilves an' makes sounds that's more or less human, an' ates out iv plates, an' they swap smokin' tobacco an sing songs together an' th' next day they up early jabbing holes in each ot with long, cold baynits. An' whin it's over they'se me an' Chamberlain at h victoryous an' Kruger an' Schwartzmei at home akelly victoryous. An' they ma me prime minister or Aldherman, but whin I want a man to put in me coal I don't take one with a wooden leg.

"I'll niver go down again to see sojers go off to th' war. But ye'll see me at th' dep with a brass band whin th' men that cau wars starts f'r th' scene iv carnage. W Congress goes forth to th' sun-kissed rain-jooled isles in the Passyfic no heartier cheer will be heard thin th' or two that rises fr'm th' bosom iv M Dooley. Says I, give thim th' chan make histhry an' lave the young men o home an' make our sheets. If Chamber likes war so much 'tis him that ought t down there in South Africa peltin' over th road with ol' Kruger chasin' him with hoe. Th' man that likes fightin' ought to b willin' to turn in an' spell his fellow coun thrymen himsilf. An' I'd aven go this fa an' say that if Mack wants to subjoo th dam Philippeens"——

"Ye're a thraitor," said Mr. Hennessy

"I know it," said Mr. Dooley, comp cently.

"Ye're an anti-expansionist."

"If ye say that again," cried M angrily, "I'll smash ye'er head."